

Prolegomena

A
L E T T E R
TO THE REVEREND
DR. RICHARD WATSON,
K I N G's
PROFESSOR OF DIVINITY
IN THE
U N I V E R S I T Y
O F
C A M B R I D G E.

• The SECOND EDITION, with ADDITIONS.

*Gerere, quàm fieri, tempore posterius, re, atque
usu prius est.* SALLUST.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN the Author of the following sheets ventured to commit his thoughts to the press, he had no expectation of finding Readers beyond the verge of the University; but as a large impression has been sold,—and the publisher is now preparing for a Second Edition,—the Author has given a few more of his reflections on the Influence of the Crown.—These, like most second parts, may be worse than the first:—they are published however with the same intentions as the former,—a sincere desire to undeceive the People in regard to the delusive projects laid before them,—and an ardent wish that they would not impute the errors of particular men to the account of any failure in the Constitution.

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TO THE PUBLIC, we have no expectation of gain.
Our readers beyond the verge of the Uni-
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significance of the system—these, like most
of his former works, may be more than repaid
by the public interest, and the same
attention as the former, and a more direct
to the public, the result in regard to the
whole project will be to the public—and we
trust with that they would not regret
the cost of publication, and the account
of the volume in the Constitution.

L E T T E R

T O

Dr. WATSON, &c.

S I R,

ALTHOUGH I disapprove of Anonymous Correspondence, yet as my name is too insignificant to add weight to my arguments, the Public must excuse my reserve on this head; but with you, Sir, I wish to deal so fairly, and candidly,

———positis pro nomine signis,

that you shall have no reason to complain, that your adversary assaults you in the dark.

Give me leave, therefore, to inform you, that in youth we trod the same Academic Ground, partook of the same board, drank of the same cup, and walked as friends together. As soon as we

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had

had attained our degrees, the Path you chose to honour and preferment, was, to shine in the University, by means of these comprehensive Abilities Nature had bestowed upon you.—I plunged into the wide world, and flattered myself with as fair a prospect from my connexions and address.

The Event has proved the rectitude of your Judgment, and the vanity of mine; —You, are advanced to wealth and dignity,—I, after a variety of unsuccessful attempts, am at last settled in an obscure vicarage, where my condition is only just above the level of Indigence and Contempt.

In this retreat I indulge the bent of my natural inclinations, which are somewhat of a Philosophic cast; I amuse myself with the researches of polite literature, or I unfold the page of History, and observe the manners, tempers, and follies of different nations.

I am neither out of humour or disgusted with the World, and one object of reflection in my calmest and serenest hours, is, to turn my eyes upon the fortunes of those who were companions of
my

my Youth, to mark their errors and miscarriages; their progress and advancement.

In the number of these, no one has engaged more of my attention and admiration than yourself; and if I have any skill in the Philosophy of the Human Heart, I think I can point out some of the operations of your's, which all your friends, and, perhaps, you yourself, are unacquainted with.

From our earliest acquaintance I admired you for your candour, your courage, your integrity, and the openness of your hand and heart.—I revered that Industry, and unremitting Diligence, I could not imitate, and I esteemed the clearness and solidity of your Understanding, as a gift God had bestowed upon very few of our species.

I observed the superior facility these qualities afforded you in your advancement, I was one of your few friends who saw your progress with triumph instead of Envy; and, at this moment, I respect and honour you as much as any man living, your *political Creed* only excepted.

If, on this head, we differ, give me leave to examine the ground on which you have built your principles, and see, whether they are formed on that large scale a Philosopher ought to prefer, or whether they are not narrowed by the temper of the times, and contracted by that Spirit of Party, which, in a degree, actuates every Individual of this Country.

Your first step in Politics (like that of every young man) was *Opposition*.—When Mr. Crofts was proposed by the D. of G. as Member for the University, You—respected by your equals,—looked up to even by your Seniors,—warm from the works of Locke, Sidney, Harrington, &c. and full of youthful Ideas of Independance;—found means, in the course of a very few hours, to compel a Man to become a Candidate, who was averse to the Character of an Opponent, and conducted your designs so skilfully as to make your Opposition respectable, your power, consequence, and abilities, worthy of attention.

The D. of G. had very wisely placed the B. of P. at the head of your Society;

a Man, whose elegant Manners and knowledge of Mankind, were likely to conciliate the sentiments of the University to a reign, not opened with the most auspicious circumstances. The Bp. saw, and the D. of G. saw that you were an adversary worth regarding.—The former for the peace of his Society—the latter for the peace of the University.

Nor was it long before a favourable opportunity offered, of shewing their disposition towards you. The Chair of the Divinity Professor became vacant. Many circumstances concurred why the University should wish you to fill it,—your abilities,—your courage,—your personal dignity and authority all conspired.—Your age, and your want of the proper degree, were the only obstacles.—This was the moment for the D. to act;—he seized it eagerly;—every remora was wisely and generously removed,—every obstacle surmounted, and you were happily invested with the dignity and emoluments of that high and splendid office.

This first step softened somewhat of the rigour of your conceptions in regard to the *quick* effects of Power, it brought you in-

to

to a better temper, and a few months after his Grace found you acquiescent in his free offer of a sinecure, to be exchanged for a Prebend of Ely. All this was brought about in that liberal and unconditional form, that suited your lofty Spirit ; and all opposition to Dicky Crofts (as you used to call him) was forgotten.

The deduction of these transactions is not designed to throw any imputation on your conduct,—but to instance those natural workings and gradations in the mind of men, who think themselves honest, as you do, and who really are so.—Generous minds are to be won by generous means ; —the Great are perfectly skilled in the art of giving these their full effect ;—they are what they feel themselves, and apply to others ;—and they level them with as certain an aim at the generous and honest, as they do interest and corruption, at the sordid and avaricious.

If the D. of G. had continued to form part of the administration in these *flagitious* times, whether from motives of private gratitude you would have continued to adhere to his system, is a problem not necessary to solve ;—I rather imagine from
your

your high notions of general independance you would not.—But luckily for you, your Patron after having deserted his——, in the hour of distress; deserted his principles likewise. Consequently approached nearer a coincidence with your ideas, than a desire of attracting your's into the vortex of his own.

In this situation, Sir, happily for you, you may indulge all your fanciful excursions into the regions of Political Theory, without incurring the least danger of making a breach in the ties of private Gratitude.—But it is in this very Theory * my old Friend and I must differ for ever. For it is in this point you deceive yourself, and act under the same fallacious principles that deceive almost all the rest of mankind. You extract from reading and Philosophy, the most exalted and generous notions of Liberty and Independance; but apply your deductions to countenance the paltry and narrow interests of a particular party.

I do not pretend to much skill in Mathematics—but Bp. Wilkins has in-

* *Vide* Sermon preached before the University on the late Fast.

formed me, that in this most precise of Sciences, Theory and Practice, are too often incompatible.—How weak then must the effect of Theory be, when applied to Politicks! the most undefined of sciences, (if a Science) and the component parts of which, it is next to impossible to calculate in their operation, and effect.

You, Sir, who understand the writings of Locke, better than I do my horn-book, must know, that he was as unfortunate * in practical politics, as he was judicious, rational and philosophical in his Theory. You, Sir, cannot be ignorant, that though Locke's principles are supposed in every government upon earth, they exist in none.

* It is, by no means, the design of the author to enter the lists with such a respectable antagonist as Mr. Locke.—He reveres his name, and his generous system of Theoretic Liberty, as much as any man.—But the application of Theory has succeeded much better in the hands of Statesmen, than Philosophers.—Mr. Locke's plan for the settlement of Carolina, was under the necessity of being reformed in every essential point, or the province had been a desert at this day.—Plato, Xenophon, Harrington, Bp. Berkley, were never indulged with an opportunity of reducing their systems into practice—probably they would have had no better success.

The

The *Original Compact*, and a *State of Nature*, are like the postulates in Mathematics—which are always taken for granted; but which in reality, are either not worth proof, or incapable of it. No error can arise from this in Mathematics, but in Politics the case is far otherwise;—because the deductions from these postulates, will furnish arguments for the subversion of every civil government existing.

A *State of Nature*, however supposed, is a mere fiction of the brain; but if it ever existed—it is now no more; the Islanders of the Pacific Ocean, the Hottentots, Cherokees, or Illinois know it not: but if they approximate to it,—is it a *state of peace* as Dr. W.* calls it?—No, Sir, it is a state of war, bloodshed, and horror; and I assert this upon an authority you dare not deny—for your Bible will tell you, before Abraham was, was War;—and though it is elegant in speculation to deduce a state of Society from a state of Nature, you know, as well as I, that the deduction is an hypothesis, and not a fact.—But to what would you ap-

* Page 2.

ply this Hypothesis? to other countries or your own? If you apply it to others, it concerns not us;—if to your own, ask yourself one question before you overturn the State;—Whether, at this moment, with all its corruptions, the Constitution of England does not preserve the equal rights of mankind, better than any polity you can point out?

The Americans, at this hour, plead the rights of natural liberty against their Parent State.—If they have found them under their own constitution, Dr. W. may congratulate them;—but if the little finger of their present Law is not heavier than the Loins of ours—let them judge who live under it; and I will venture to prophecy, that if they establish the Independance they are now aiming at,—they will either groan under a tyranny, or erect a constitution that offends more against the *Original Compact* and a *State of Nature*, than our own.

Speculative Politicians talk as lightly and fluently of *reverting to first principles*, as if it required no more trouble than to rectify a piece of clock-work that was out of order. History, on the contrary,

informs us, that this cannot be effected but by civil war, and that the event, in general, is not reformation*, but TYRANNY.

I should be lost in the labyrinth of your late publication, if I were to strike into every winding and turning that presents itself in my way;—I wish only to seize the clue of your main argument, and follow it without deviation, lead where it will.

The grand question you propose, is, *What are the limits of † Resistance and Obedience?* A question not to be resolved without Blood!—and yet put with as much indifference, as you would propose a mathematical question in the Schools.—But if proposed,—why not answered?—Or rather, why answered in a form of words that evaporates in air?—For after expa-

* The event of the great civil war in England, ending in a Tyranny, made all parties shake hands, and re-establish the old form of Government. The crown, however, *lost* something in the scramble—by the abolition of the Star-chamber—Ship-Money—the court of wards—the clerk of the markets—but it *got*—the EXCISE.—Few instances of reformation occur in History besides the Revolution.

† Page 10.

tiating through two pages again in the regions of Fancy, the result of your enquiries seems to be this.

We trust and hope there are many, who with a perfect veneration for the person of the King, the dignity of his government, the legal rights and all the constitutional powers of the Crown, wish to see its overgrown influence reduced, by lawful and quiet means, to its ancient size; and the several powers of the different branches of the Legislature restored to their salutary poize, and constitutional Equilibrium.*

If, instead of giving us this high-sounding, long-winded sentence, you had fairly said, that *Resistance* was not yet lawful, or that it was;—we should have understood you.—*For if Resistance is become lawful*, it was suitable to Dr. W.'s courage to declare it.—If it is not,—it became his candour—his respect to his audience, his piety to his country, to declare that likewise.

Your present answer, instead of determining the question, leaves it behind, and flies to the popular word *Influence*, which you would *resist* by *legal* and *quiet* means.

I shall examine these terms presently, —but as I mean to join issue with you on the whole of the question, give me leave to settle the limits of Resistance first.

State the ground of it then, as large as you please;—say that the King is only the first servant of the People,—that the Coronation Oath, and Oath of Allegiance are mutual and reciprocal.—That Tyranny, Violence, Oppression, Perversion or withholding of Justice, Claims of a dispensing power, Arbitrary Impositions, &c. absolve the subject from his Allegiance, and justify Resistance.—On these heads there can be no dispute, they are articles of my political creed, as well as yours.

But the King's professor does not accuse his Master as contaminated with a single blemish from such violent infractions of his Oath;—in the room of these, he substitutes the *Influence* of the Crown; and then foresees as much danger to the constitution from sap and mine, as if it were attacked by storm and open Violence. The case is widely different;—in the latter instance, the most ignorant are competent judges;—in the former,

former, every imaginable evil may be suggested by Abstract Reasoners, Orators, and Philosophers, without the existence of a single one in reality.

This may or may not be the case at present; I neither affirm it, or deny it. — But Dr. W. upon enquiry will find, that the Influence of the Crown is at least as *legal*, as his *legal* means of resisting it.

The framers of our Constitution very wisely and judiciously made the Sovereign the dispenser of favours, as well as the fountain of honour: a very plain proof that they were Statesmen, and not Philosophers. Philosophers suppose more perfection in the nature of man, than it really possesses. — This is the error of Plato, Xenophon, Harrington, Locke, Bp. Berkley, Helvetius, Rousseau, and Dr. Watson; and this is the reason, that if their systems were set in motion, they could not be kept in order for a single month. But our constitution, which in its Idea, aims at perfection, and which (I from my soul believe) comes as near it, as any human system ever can, never supposed that every member of the society it formed,

formed, was as perfect as the Constitution itself.—It supposed that the very nature of man implied error,

Humanum est nescire et errare.

It allowed for the mistakes of the head and the heart; it foresaw a thousand sources of deception, and it provided a remedy for them all.

Overweening ostentation of Liberty, Republican Principles, Pride, Envy, Disappointment, Revenge, are of the number; and against all these, if the Crown is intrusted with the dispensation of favours, it is a weapon of Defence, not of Attack.

No, says the learned Professor, it was so formerly; but it is now so *overgrown*, that it has changed its Nature, it is now an offensive weapon, and a very dangerous one:—it may be so;—still it is a lawful one,—till taken away by Law, and Law only.—But suppose Law is too weak to resume what it has given,—then we will take it by force, *says the Professor*.—No, he did not go quite so far, but this must be the deduction from his reasoning.

Believe me, Sir, that great Piety is due to our Country, before we precipitate her
into

into civil war. In just argument, nothing but overt acts of Tyranny can justify measures of force and violence, and then only because TYRANNY IS WORSE THAN CIVIL WAR.

But you, Sir, are too calm and sober to call Influence a Tyranny. No:—but it threatens one.—What under the present Sovereign?—No;—*in his hands it is a blessing * to his people.*—He is an Augustus—but his successor may be a †Tiberius,—his posterity Nero's, Caligula's, Domitians.

Whether the Prince of W. will be a Tiberius, neither you or I can tell;—I trust, he will not.—I have some skill in Physiognomy ‡, and I read gentleness, frankness, and humanity in the lines of his Countenance;—whether his posterity will be Nero's and Caligula's is likewise unrevealed?—But the compliment is a pleasant one.—Perhaps, you did

* Page 12.

† Ibid.

‡ Bp. Burnet observes, that the statues of Tiberius he saw at Rome, resembled the lines in the countenance of Charles II. The greatest difference I know, is, that one was a merry Tyrant, the other, the most reserved and gloomy that ever lived.

not mean to draw the comparison;—why then place it so close, so very close to the King's name?—Your Readers will interpret it, each according to his own principles; and your *friends* will triumph in it, as a bold stroke. I know your heart;—you will spurn at the idea—and term it an *illustration* instead of a *comparison*;—be it so—still it is odious, and ungenerous.

But * unhappily, Sir, the K. has no more reason to be pleased with the Type of Augustus, than his posterity with that of Nero.—Augustus was a man of blood,—an usurper on the Liberties of his Country;—his proscriptions exceeded the horrors of Sylla's, (look, Sir, into Dion Cassius); he put more free Citizens to Death, than have suffered on the scaffold in our own country, from the Conquest to the present hour; and if he ruled with moderation at last, it was

* The complimentary stile is not more congenial to the independant spirit of Dr. W. than Wit, Ridicule and Pleasantry to the Austerity of Demosthenes.

Ἐνθα μὲντοι γελοῖος εἶναι βιάζεται, καὶ ἀσεβὴς, καὶ γέλωτα κινεῖ μάλλον, ἢ καταγελάται· ὅταν δὲ ἐγγίξῃ δέλη τῷ ἐπίχαρις εἶναι, τότε πλέον ἀρίσται. Longin. page 79, Ed. Toup.

not till the Conspiracy of Cinna had convinced him, that the murder of his Subjects was no security to his usurped domination.

But the whole *illustration* is as *false*, as it is *invidious*.—Invidious,—because it tends to create a belief that the present Influence of the Crown leads to a Tyranny like that at Rome.—False,—because the most despotic government in Europe could not support a Domitian on his Throne, for three months.

I ask pardon for this digression,—it was not intentional,—it lay in my way, and I found it.—But I return now to consider, how far the Influence of the Crown, in its present state, can justify resistance, (resistance unto Blood I mean). And here one obvious reason occurs, that ought to check in some degree the fury even of the most violent,—which is, that the Evil complained of, is not so bad as the Remedy.—The Evils of Influence even in the Professor's opinion, are the Evils of Futurity, Prophecy, and Speculation.—Civil War is certain and immediate Distress. But be these Evils great and flagrant as you please to suppose;

pose; still the present Sovereign is no ways concerned in promoting them.—They have sprung out of the unweildly power of the Empire, as the Professor himself allows, and they are not yet arrived at that dangerous crisis of maturity, as to require dangerous, perhaps fatal remedies, to be applied to them.

The truth is, that Influence is the vice of a Free State.—Monarchy knows little of it;—Despotism is totally unacquainted with it;—Rome, under her Tyrants forgot the name; and I do verily believe that there are no complaints against it, in Prussia, at this day.—In our Country, it has varied with the condition of the Times; but its legitimate Birth was at the Revolution;—it was as natural a consequence of that event, as Storms and Whirlwinds are of an Atmosphere;—for where the reign of Power ends, that of Influence begins.

A Free Citizen exercises one privilege of Freedom, when he sells his voice, and makes Shipwreck of his Conscience, for those who can be *forced* are never

*bought**, but let us suppose Influence, Vena-
 lity, and Corruption, to lead to a Tyranny,
 in our Country, as they did in Greece,
 and Rome.—The fact is certainly true;—
 but it will not be a Tyranny of the
 Crown;—it will be by deposing a
 George the Sixth, to put a Cromwell in
 his stead.

Try the Experiment when you will;
 take the Influence out of the hands of
 the Sovereign, and place it where you
 please, it will be in worse.—The Col-
 lection of twelve Millions of Taxes,—
 an Army of an hundred and fifty thou-
 sand men,—a navy of ninety thousand,—
 are fine fields for Influence to act in;—
 yet, hitherto, we are free,—because these
 are in the Sovereign's hands.—Can you

* Dr. W. and Mr. Gibbon are very severe on the
 servility of the Roman Senate under the Emperors—
 Analyse their case—and the reproach ceases. Every
 new Usurper *purchased* the support of the Army, by
 Donatives and Largeſſes. *He* governed the *Army*
 by *Influence*—the *Army* governed the *Empire* by *Force*.
 The Senate was just as servile, as a Traveller is to
 a Robber who holds a pistol to his breast, and
 deserves as much censure for its servility.—I refer
 these Gentlemen to the life of Agricola—and leave
 them to judge where Virtue and Courage could find
 a field to act in.

place

place the same charge in the disposal of any other member of the Legislature, and say we should be free for a day,—an hour?

I sincerely believe, Sir, that you are as doubtful of the issue of a Civil War, in bringing about a Reformation, as I am;—I believe you abhor it as much,—and I believe that, by *legal* and *quiet* means, you understand such a reformation, as took place at the Revolution.—If this could be effected, *and without a Revolution*, I, and every Englishman, are with you heart and hand.—But do not deceive yourself, the Revolution is an Unique in the Volume of History; many circumstances conspired that can never meet again;—the Memory of a recent Civil War,—the acknowledged Tyranny of the Sovereign,—the attack upon Religion,—the Overthrow of Law,—and yet after all these, if James's cowardice had not been as much beyond calculation, as his Folly,—it *might* not have been effected at all,—it certainly *could* not without blood;—but that was a cause worth bleeding in.

Can

Can you deceive yourself with a vain hope that this could be the case now? look round at the state of parties,—mark their tempers, their characters, their principles, their actions;—and, before you go a step farther in forwarding their designs—in disturbing the community—in insulting your with groundless jealousies, and ungenerous suspicions; ask whether subjects may not be ungrateful, as well as kings unjust;—Kings are not Painters, as the King of Beasts said to his fellow-traveller;—if they were,—the picture would be—Henry the IVth of France, the best Monarch that ever reigned, who had two and forty Conspiracies formed against his life by his subjects, and who fell at last by the hands of an Assassin.

You, perhaps, think, that you are no way aiding or abetting to the designs of others;—that your own intentions are sincere and honest;—Hampden thought the same, and yet his glorious death contributed to give weight to the ordinances of the Rump;—establishment to the Major-Generals of Cromwell. Do you think his Manes saw this, and slept in Peace?

Turn

Turn your eyes for one moment from your Theories of perfection, and look into the annals of Mankind, you will see that honest men are employed by the Ambitious, to answer their purposes,—and laid aside when it suits their convenience.—The *conduct* of Parties, in all ages and countries, is the same, they differ only in their *ends* and *aims*.—You will find a Cæsar, a Cicero, a Crassus, an Antony, a Cassius, a Casca, — in Athens, Florence, France, and England.—A Majority and an Opposition form the internal History of every free State;—and as the Majority stand on the defence, they *assume* a reverence for the forms of the Constitution, and an aversion to all change in the Establishment.—The opposition are assailants—they condemn all present measures, they profess amendment and reform, they deal in calumny, crimination, and reproach; and in order to forward these, they must have in the number of their adherents, a class of men, whose business it is, to sound the Alarm,

———— spargere voces
In vulgum ambiguas,————

to

to unfold matters by degrees, to try the ground before them;—Men who are not admitted into the depth and extent of their designs,—men of as honest hearts as your own, who think they are speaking truth while they are only serving a purpose; and who really mean liberty, while they are promoting a faction. If such be your situation, *lay * your hand upon your heart, and feel whether it throbs with conscious shame, or conscious pride.*

In the whole tenour of your late discourse, you deceive yourself under an idea of holding an impartial course; you disperse your reprehensions with an equal hand; you make general complaints of deviation from Christian principles;—you carry on this error by feint attacks upon the outworks of Corsica, Poland, France and Spain;—when in a moment the Battery is unmasked, and the whole power of your forces falls upon the Citadel of Influence and Corruption. You deceive your adversaries by these feints, and yourself too, I verily believe; but your *friends* understand the design perfectly;—they

* Page 9.

glory in the management and vigour of the assault, and disseminate your publication with as much assiduity, as if it were a Congress Gazette.

They, too, perfectly understand the power of this charm, Influence, upon the minds of the people,—they have tried twenty others before without half the effect; —Scotch Juntos, —Freedom of Election,—American Slavery,—Scalping knives and Tomahawks, —Rum Contracts, &c. &c. These have all been the Cry of the day, till they have been exploded, confuted, or worn out; but Influence was kept *pour la bonne bouche*.

It is a lucky word; its undefined and comprehensive signification give it the true standard for the parole of a Party, and the understanding of the Multitude; —it spreads through the Country,—it dazzles Majesty, it confounds Ministers, it overawes Parliament,—and under the management of so fanciful a Statesman,—so exuberant an Orator as Mr. B. can receive no additional strength from Eloquence like yours, no diminution from an attack so weak as mine.

E

Still,

Still, as an Englishman, I have a right to have an opinion of my own; and when I hear an Orator tell me, that the King is the Creature * of the People—that the narrower his Revenue, the greater is his splendour; and that 48,000 *l.* is sufficient for the expences of the first Monarch in Europe,—I look back to the Long Parliament, who swore they would make Charles the most glorious prince in Christendom, but three months before they cut off his head.

Should this humble performance attract the attention of your Friends—they will load me with the titles of Slave, Sycophant, Hireling, supporter of venality and corruption; but I avow it to their teeth, that *Influence* there must be as long as there is Liberty, and that if they endeavour to wrest it out of those hands where the Constitution has placed it,—to touch it, is *dangerous*—to transfer it *ruinous* to the Constitution, to their Country, and Themselves.

* I have no objection to the Theory or Principle—no—nor to the word itself in it's just sense,—but to the idea it excites in the mind of the multitude.

But,

But, by a man of your Philosophical Cast, I may expect to be treated with more moderation—I may be asked whether, in my heart, I am a friend to the present open and avowed Corruption?—not one jot, Sir, more than yourself—I hold the man that gives his voice for Hire as great a fool as knave. I cry, *blessings on the man* who can restore the People to their Virtue—and I wish the whole body of Electors throughout Great Britain, to hold this one maxim in remembrance at the ensuing Election, that
IF THEY WILL NOT BE BOUGHT, THEY
CANNOT BE SOLD.

I here take my leave of *Influence*, but have a short account still to settle with you. Shipwrecked * Consciences, Whisperers, Flatterers, Sycophants about Princes, Poison instilled into Royal Ears, are topics too trite and stale even for a Sermon before the University. Too true, undoubtedly, are your representations on this head;—but they have been true from the beginning of the world, and will be

* Page 8, and passim.

to the end of it.—Pharaoh, Nimrod, and Belshazzar, laboured under the greatest obloquy on this score—and all succeeding Monarchs stand in the same wicked predicament.—I sincerely wish Dr. W. success in his endeavours to correct these enormities—I detest them equally with him, but complaints of this sort mean nothing, prove nothing;—they apply to Charlemagne and Cyrus, Muley Ishmael and Lewis the XVIth.—However, if they add weight to the lighter scale, throw in as many as you please, good Mr. Professor.

Of the same cast are those warm and unnecessary effusions of the heart, in praise of Liberty;—*It * is our Duty by social Compact to be loyal; it is our right by nature to be free.*—There wants no Ghost in Denmark to tell us this,—we all allow it and acknowledge it;—but when no one impeaches our *Loyalty*, no one infringes on our *Liberty*,—they are engraved on the tablet of our heart,—not sporting on the tip of our tongue. The bad can employ these, as well as the

good,—a Cromwell as readily as an Hampden—a Catiline as a Cicero;—but from a rational Disputant, like Dr. W. we expect Reason instead of Sentiment,—Argument instead of Exclamation and Apostrophe.

But Ireland!—Oh, my dear Sir, I am weary of following you.—You rejoice that, either by force or Petition, the Irish have obtained the equal rights of Commerce;—this is but joy at second hand, for Lord Chatham rejoiced before you, that three millions of Americans had taken up arms;—to judge from the present prospect of affairs, you will have fresh cause for joy every day;—you may exult in the repeal of Poyning's Law;—triumph at the erection of an Irish Republic;—laugh, sing and dance at the Annihilation of Parliament,—the reign of Associations, the extinction of Law, and the overthrow of the Constitution.—But when the Frenzy of your Joy, Exultation, Triumph, and Laughter are over, ask yourself one calm question, Whether, upon these occasions, the Character of Heraclitus is not more suitable
to

to a Philosopher, than that of Democritus?

I should be guilty of a great omission, if I dropt my pen, before I had paid my tribute of admiration to the happy conclusion of your Discourse in a Prayer with an IF;—your *if* has great Virtue, as Shakespeare observed two hundred years ago;—but to the best of my remembrance, Sir W. Wyndham of Seditious Memory, was the first introducer of this Figure into the Rhetoric of Opposition.—It has turned out under the direction of skilful hands, as useful in the conduct of Debate, as in the management of a duel; and a Demagogue by holding up his IF, for an Ægis, may talk treason in safety the whole day long.—But I believe it was never introduced into the service of Divinity, before Dr. W. presided at the head of that Science.

The sublimity of Stile he adopts upon this occasion, is so peculiarly his own, that it is a species of Impiety to *add ought* to such a Composition, or *diminish from it*. Still like a dauber that has the presumption to paint upon a picture of Raphael's

Raphael's, I cannot help thinking it wants a few touches from a pencil like mine, and that I could fill up the Outline of the master with warmer tints and more varied shades—for Instance,

“ Lord God Omnipotent * Ruler of
 “ Nations, hear us! persuaded that thou
 “ ART, in utter self Annihilation, we
 “ adore thy inscrutable Nature,—persua-
 “ ded that thou art the moral Governor,
 “ as well as the Creator of the Universe,
 “ in stedfast Faith we address our prayer.
 “ —Thy wisdom, O Lord, is not limited
 “ by Time, it pervades Eternity! Thy
 “ Goodness is not circumscribed by place,
 “ it comprehends the Universe;—IF for
 “ the advancement of thy Glory, &c.—IF
 “ in thy judgment we are engaged with
 “ our Brethren in an unrighteous *cause*,
 “ in thy *mercy* pour down upon us thy
 “ choicest curses, in Storm, Tempest, Fire
 “ and Brimstone.—Desolate our lands,—
 “ lay waste our cities,—grant that Brother
 “ may rise up against Brother, Father
 “ against Son;—that their hands may be
 “ red in the blood of their Friends—and

* Page pen.

“ that

“ that their bones may be eaten like Jeze-
 “ bel’s, by Dogs in the highways.—May
 “ their Wives be torn from their bosoms,
 “ —and the heads of their Children dash-
 “ ed against the stones ; and IF to the
 “ counsels of the Divine Wisdom it
 “ seemeth meet, may the souls and bodies
 “ of this whole People be cast together
 “ into that tremendous gulph, where the
 “ worm dieth not, and where the fire is
 “ not quenched. Which God of his in-
 “ finite mercy grant”—&c. &c.

This, Sir,—would be a true picture
 of the Sublime, never surpassed but by
 the *Torva Mimalloneis* of Nero himself—
 and if we were so happy as to have one
 of those Nero’s on the Throne at this
 day, whom you promise us in a genera-
 tion or two ; he would be at a loss
 whether he should reward you, for the
 boldness of the original Sketch, or me,
 for the happy execution of the masterly
 design.

Before I conclude, give me leave in
 sober truth to assure you, that however
 freely I have dealt with your publica-

tion and politics—I profess at this moment the same regard for your personal Character as ever.—It has been my endeavour to shew, that by the manner of your deductions, the best principles of Government may be tortured not only to overturn the present system in our own country, but every Government on Earth;—I subscribe to your principles most sincerely, but in the application of these the fallacy of all political reasoning lies.—My aim is, if this performance should find readers,—to bring rational people back to the admiration of that Constitution, which, with all its errors and corruptions, is still the noblest in the world,—to warn them against the seduction of overheated zealots in the cause of Liberty,—to shew them that charges of Bribery*, Corruption, and Venality have been the Cant of Opposition in all

* Χαλεπώτατοι δὲ οἱ ἐπὶ ΧΡΗΜΑΣΙ προσκατηγοροῦντες ἐπίδειξιν τινα. εἰ μὲν γὰρ ἀμαθίαν κατητιῶντο, ὁ μὴ πείσας ἀξυνετώτερος ἂν δόξας εἶναι, ἢ ἀδικώτερος ἀπεχώρει· ἀδικίας δὲ ἐπιφερομένης, πείσας τε, ὑποπτος γίγνεται, καὶ μὴ τυχὼν μετ' ἀξυνεσίας καὶ ἀδίκος.—Ἡ ΤΕ ΠΟΛΙΣ ΟΥΚ ΩΦΕΛΕΙΤΑΙ ΕΝ ΤΩ, ΤΟΙΩ, ΔΕ. Thacyd. page 177. Hudf.

Countries and all ages;—to teach them, that when that Opposition has obtained its own ends, the people will be forgotten as much as they have been by all former Oppositions. And to set forth the danger every Free People runs in subverting fundamentals on account of Evils, which though visible, are not destructive; though livid on the surface, not yet cankerous at the heart.

You, Sir, hold a different course; and as mankind have ever delighted in calumniating their superiors, as the sense of Evil is much stronger than the perception of Good,—your argument must be popular, while mine will be scorned, flouted, and derided;—still I had rather be Abdiel, than Belial, Moloch, or Satan.

But I trust that you, who are a Philosopher as well as a Politician, will not think the worse of me for differing from you in sentiments;—mine, I assure you, are as sincere as your own, and as unbiassed by any private interest.—Let God and the Event judge between us for our Country. I still honour and respect you,—I know your heart;—I know at the very moment you are

propagating Disaffection, your soul is Loyal,—that while you are promoting a Faction, you think you are pleading for Liberty,—and while you preach Reformation, you mean Peace.—I tell you again from History and Experience, each of these is respectively incompatible ;—and if in despite of this, you will still go on in the high *priori* Road of Theory and Speculation, perverting your Principles by the deductions from them ; you, like every other honest man, will find yourself at last, the Dupe of Party, and the Tool of Knaves.

And now, Sir, with the most perfect charity for the mistakes of your head, and the truest esteem for the Virtues of your Heart, believe me ever

Your friend and admirer,

&c. &c.

propagating Disunion, your tool is
I say, — that while you are promoting
Disunion, you think you are pleading for
Liberty, — and while you preach Disunion,
you mean to tell you
again from Liberty and Disunion,
of their respectability in the
and in the midst of this, you will tell us
on in the highest Road of Theory and
Speculation, perverting your Principles by
the deductions from them, — you will tell
every other honest man, — that your
self at last, the Dope of Party, and the

TOO OF THE W. N.

And now, Sir, with the most perfect
charity for the mistakes of your head,
and the most perfect for the Vices of
your heart, believe me, Sir,
that your friends and supporters are
tired of large in Parliament, and if the
movement of the Disunion had a
thousand of these arguments that repeat
themselves in every By-stander, it would be
impossible in a man who is withdrawn
from the world, — any further to follow
of information that may be had.

A D D R E S S
T O T H E
P E O P L E,
O N T H E
I N F L U E N C E
O F T H E
C R O W N.

SINCE the publication of the foregoing sheets, the question concerning the *Influence of the Crown*, has been agitated at large in Parliament; and if the friends of the Constitution had availed themselves of those arguments that appear obvious to every Bystander, it would be impertinent in a man who is withdrawn from the world,—and professes no source of information but what may be deduced
from

from History and reflection, to offer his sentiments upon the subject.

But the government of all popular assemblies depending more upon finesse, than reason ; it may perhaps be easier to come at truth, by cool disquisition, than oratorical debate ; and it may be the advantage of a Spectator, to see more of the game than those engaged in it.

Mr. D.'s famous motion, *that the Influence of the Crown had increased, was increasing, and ought to be diminished*; is like every one of Dr. W.'s arguments, perfectly true in it's principles, but very fallacious in it's consequences. It ought to have been opposed primarily on the ground of its being an *abstract proposition*: for there Mr. D.* felt his weakness, and almost acknowledged it: nor is there any resolution the house ought more readily to come to,—than never to debate an abstract proposition ; because nothing is so easy as to point out an evil, nothing

* The author does not pretend to any information, but such as is open to every body:—And both parties in the house having borne testimony to Mr. Woodfall's veracity and impartiality, he doubts not but, for the outline of a debate and the leading facts, he may rely on this authority.

so difficult as to find a remedy : but to declare to the people that an Evil exists, and to disappoint them in the redress of it, is a mischief of such consequence, that it tends very fast to dissolve all bonds between the subject and the Governor.

It seems now to be generally understood, that the clamour against Influence, is only the Cry of the Day ; but with Mr. D. Mr. B. and all the honest men of the party, it is doubtless a firm and settled principle ; let us therefore examine both the fallacy concealed under the proposition, and the vanity of the remedies they would apply.

The Constitution has vested in the Crown the whole disposition of the Revenues *, and the patronage of all offices civil and military ;—a part of the prerogative so salutary, so unalienable, that it has never been controverted, unless when the Constitution itself was annihilated. Now, to say that the *Influence* derived from this prerogative, is greater at pre-

* The revenues it is true, all (except the Civil list) are applied to particular purposes ; but every hand through which they pass, either in the Collection or Expenditure, is appointed by the Sovereign.

sent, than it was at the Revolution ; is only to say, that the revenues are greater, the army, the navy, the civil establishment greater,—and that these are greater, is only a consequence of the increase of the Empire since that period.

That this power is increasing, is likewise true ; because the army, navy, and taxes increase every day ;—and not one farthing is raised on the subject, not a sloop fitted out, nor an independent company formed, but what adds to it.—That this power ought to be diminished, may possibly be true. But the means of doing this, are so difficult in the execution, so doubtful in the issue ; that unless they can be brought to bear without injuring the Constitution, the Remedy is worse than the Disease.

The Remedy Mr. B. has proposed, is to introduce Oeconomy into the Civil list. A remedy very fair to the eye, and very useful in fact,—but as short of the grand object as the maddest of the ideas conceived by the Associators. This proposal he meant to act two different ways ;—by diminishing the number of places,—to diminish the number of placemen in parliament,

liament;—and by exonerating the Crown of unnecessary expences, to preclude the disgrace of the Sovereign, in becoming a suppliant to his people for the discharge of his debts.

Let us suppose then, that Mr. B.'s Bill had succeeded in it's full extent, and that he had actually procured a saving of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds. Must not every one see, that for every placeman the Crown lost in Parliament, it would gain a thousand pounds to bestow in pensions?—and does not Mr. B. acknowledge that an avowed placeman*, is a less dangerous person than a private pensioner?

* There is no notion more successfully or more absurdly propagated, than that every placeman—is an hireling. That there are men attached to the minister by sordid motives only, is as true as that there are others attached to the leaders of opposition by motives of interest, revenge or ambition. But there exists still a body of men between both extremes, who presume to think for themselves. And it is owing to these that the majorities on the great questions lately agitated, have been so various. Mr. B.'s own sentiments are supposed to be—that the man who executes a public trust faithfully, is the most useful member of the Community.

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No

No—but he would have applied this saving to the publick necessities; and not have left it in the hands of the Sovereign as an instrument of Corruption. What, Sir,—give the K— 900,000 l. a year to-day, and take it away to-morrow!—This *was* the sentiment of the house.* Mr. B. saw it was,—he saw that not one man of honour would treat his Sovereign with this indignity: he was abashed, confounded, and despaired; but this is foreign to the argument: for if this had really been effected, and the civil list reduced within the narrowest limits Mr. B.'s parsimony could devise, still it must be evident to the meanest capacity, that as long as the Collection and Disposal of the Taxes,—the appointment of all Officers Civil, Naval and Military, was left to the Sovereign (and that they must be left is evident, or the Constitution is at an end), this reform of Mr. B.'s could act no

* The ideas suggested on the debate of the Comptroller's clause evidently shewed Mr. B. that when he came to touch the personal concerns of the Sovereign,—no man of honour or sentiment, unless blinded by party zeal, would join in supporting him.—He desponded immediately, and declared his bill was lost.

other-

otherwise, than in the proportion of one hundred and fifty thousand pounds, to three and twenty millions; that is, as one, to one hundred and fifty-one.

For such an ineffectual, short-sighted reform as this, was it any object for the nation at large, to break their faith with their Sovereign,—to resume what they had given, to strip him of the exteriors of Royalty,—and, in fact, to punish him for a Crime he has not committed,—for an evil arising out of the nature of the Government itself; not from any policy or contrivance of his own?

Another plan of Reformation has been proposed by a set of men, who pretend to have associated for the redress of grievances.—If they are sincere in their professions, they will open their eyes to conviction;—if they mean only confusion,—the man that can open the eyes of the people, will have discharged a duty to his country.

They did not know what they should propose at first. *Something* was necessary; they talked of abolishing every Borough in the Kingdom, and having only County Members. This was found too mad even

for the madness of the people; and they seem at last to have acquiesced in a *gentle* measure of adding one hundred more County Members to the House; and a demand of Annual Parliaments.

Of these reformati^ons Mr. B. and the very Leaders who set the Associations on foot, have as contemptible an opinion, as the Minister himself: and whether Reformation would or would not be the consequence of these measures, they are at least an Alteration of the Constitution; and as such alone may be resisted on the clearest and justest grounds.

It has been held ridiculous to call these Associations illegal; but a body of men associated to forward an illegal act, are doubtless, in the Eye of the Law, an illegal body: and this act is so illegal, that even the sanction of the three members of the Legislature could not make it legal.

The legislative body of this Country, is intrusted with no power to alter the Constitution; it is a power never delegated by the people—never assumed by the legislature separately, or collectively; never actually, or virtually supposed to exist:

exist: for if they were judges of alterations in the Constitution, they might one day or other, take it into their heads to find out that an absolute Monarchy was a perfect Reformation: and yet, if they voted this,—no Englishman would allow that Monarchy to be legal.

The reverse of this proposition is as true as the proposition itself;—for the Legislative body have no more right to exclude the borough members;—to add county members to the House; or to vote a Republican form of Government, than a Monarchy; and if they did, upon every principle Mr. Locke lays down, the people would be justified in taking up arms.

What Reformation might be expected from annual parliaments is uncertain: perhaps no serious man wishes for them in his heart. But if they were established, it must be granted, that if a man bought his borough once a year, he could sell it once a year likewise; and that he would not do this, the people would have no better security than they have at present: for if they sell themselves to their representatives, they are not to wonder that their representative makes
the

the best interest of his money in his bargain with the Minister.

But it was said in the Letter to Dr. W. that if the People would not be bought, they could not be sold. The Associators, in seeming conformity to this Idea, wish to add an hundred County Members to the House: judging (perhaps justly) that as County members seldom buy their seats, they seldom sell their voice; and concluding (very erroneously) from hence, that with this addition they could over-balance the Borough members.

Know they not, that the greater quantity of any commodity that comes to market, the lower is it's value? and ought they not to rest assured that this glut of Voters would lower the price of a Vote?—But for a moment, suppose the contrary;—suppose them all honest, intelligent, and uncorrupt; that no minister could prevail upon them by place, pension, fraud, or artifice; from that moment, if it ever arrives—they are the governing power of this Kingdom,—and that Government is an Aristocracy.

The Associators (if they act from principle) are in this instance as blind as all
other

other petty Reformers are: they see an imaginary evil before their eyes, and they fly to the first wild Remedy that presents itself; and in order to apply this, they hazard all the essentials of the Constitution, and wish to destroy that fine Equipoise of power, that the wisdom and blood of our Ancestors was exhausted in establishing: they see a Minister whom they cannot shake by the present powers they have in the Constitution; and therefore they would sacrifice the Constitution to his Ruin.

Such are the delusions now held out to the People; whether they are yet mad enough to be led away with them, perhaps a very few months may determine: but if these few pages should in any degree contribute to remove the mist from before their eyes, the Author's end is answered;—if not,—he has left his protest upon Record, that as an individual he contributed not to the overthrow of the Constitution.

F I N I S.